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# Message Text

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64
ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 PC-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 NIC-01 OPR-02

OMB-01 HEW-08 IGA-02 RSR-01 /146 W
---------- 022563
R 211830Z JUL 73
FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2057
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 3163

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, ELAB, NU
SUBJECT: WEEKLY POLITICAL SUMMARY - JULY 14-20, 1973

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

REF: MANAGUA 3099

1. LEADING DOCTORS PROTEST CONDITIONS IN VELEZ PAIZ HOSPITAL -- ON JULY 19, NINE OF NICARAGUA'S MOST PROMINENT PHYSICIANS, ALL HOSPITAL DIVISION CHIEFS, MADE PUBLIC A LETTER TO THE DIRECTORS OF VELEZ PAIZ, MANAGUA'S ONLY FUNCTIONING GENERAL HOSPITAL, PROTESTING CONDITIONS THERE. THEIR DETAILED LIST OF COMPLAINTS PAINTS A DISMAL PICTURE OF MEDICAL CARE AT VELEZ PAIZ, WHICH THEY SAY IS BECOMING PROGRESSIVELY EVEN WORSE. THEIR DESCRIPTION OF THE "DEPLORABLE" SANITARY CONDITIONS IS ESPECIALLY GRAPHIC. THEY CONDEMN CROWDED CONDITIONS AND THE LACK OF BEDS, CLOTHING, LABORATORY SERVICES, MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND
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MEDICINES AND THE EXTREMELY BAD FOOD. THEY ALSO SAY IT IS

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IMPERATIVE TO REINSTATE THE RECENTLY FIRED RESIDENTS AND INTERNS. COMMENT: THE WILLINGNESS OF THESE HIGHLY-RESPECTED PROFESSIONALS, SOME OF WHOM ARE MEMBERS OF GENERAL SOMOZA'S LIBERAL PARTY, PUBLICLY TO PROTEST CONDITIONS AT VELEZ PAIZ AND SUPPORT THE INTERNS AND RESIDENTS FIRED BY THE GON REFLECTS GROWING NATIONAL CONCERN OVER THE DETERIORATING HOSPITAL SITUATION. END COMMENT.

2. HOSPITAL STRIKE -- ON JULY 19, THE NON-PROFESSIONAL STAFF AT MANAGULRJS VELEZ PAIZ HOSPITAL JOINED MEDICAL RESIDENTS AND INTERNS IN A STRIKE FOR IMPROVED WORKING CONDITIONS, CERTAIN BENEFITS AND INCREASED SALARIES (SEE SEPTEL). HOSPITAL WORKERS AT JINOTEPE, MASAYA, CHINANZGA, RIVAS AND LEON ARE ALSO ON STRIKE. NICARAGUA'S SIX PRINCIPAL HOSPITALS THEREFORE HAVE STAFFS ON DUTY FOR EMERGENCY CARE ONLY. GENERAL SOMOZA ACKNOWLEDGED TO THE AMBASSADOR THE SERIOUSSNESS OF THE HOSPITAL PROBLEM AND SAID HE INTENDS TO TAKE IMMEDIATE REMEDIAL ACTION. SOMOZA OBSERVED THAT MOST OF THE HOSPITAL WORKERS' DEMANDS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ELIMINATING THE RECONSTRUCTION TAX, COULD BE MET. TO RESCIND THE RECONSTRUCTION TAX FOR ONE GROUP, THE GENERAL SAID, WOULD MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO MAINTAIN THE TAX FOR OTHERS.

3. GUARDIA NACIONAL ON ALERT -- PRESUMEDLY BECAUSE OF LABOR UNREST, NATIONAL GUARD TROOPS IN MANAGUA HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO THEIR BARRACKS ON ALERT. THERE HAVE BEEN NO REPORTS AS YET OF VIOLENCE ALTHOUGH A MEETING IN FAVOR OF THE STRIKE AT THE HOSPITAL IN LEON WAS REPORTEDLY BROKEN UP BY THE NATIONAL GUARD ON JULY 19 AND SEVERAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WERE ARRESTED. APPARENTLY, GENERAL SOMOZA WILL BE TAKING NO CHANCES IN MANAGUA AND IS PREPARED TO RESPOND IN FORCE SHOULD THINGS GET DIFFICULT. HE IS ALSO UNDOUBTEDLY KEEPING HIS TROOPS IN THE BARRACKS IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE POSSIBILITY OF NEEDLESS CONFRONTATIONS. A FEW NATIONAL GUARD PERSONNEL ARE STATIONED AT VELEZ PAIZ HOSPITAL BUT APPARENTLY ONLY TO MONITOR THE SITUATION.

5. LIBERAL PARTY CELEBRATIONS -- TO NO ONE'S SURPRISE THE NUMEROUS WEEKEND LIBERAL PARTY CELEBRATIONS UNANIMOUSLY PROCLAIMED GENERAL SOMOZA AS THE PLN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIATE CONFIDENTIAL

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FOR 1974 ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT ATTEND ANY OF THEM. ATTENDANCE AT THE MAJOR EVENT IN LEON JULY 14 WAS NOTICEABLY LESS THAN IN PAST YEARS, THOUGH THE AMOUNT OF FOOD AND LIQUOR CONSUMED WAS REPORTEDLY IMPRESSIVE. SPEAKERS VIGOROUSLY COMPETED WITH ONE ANOTHER IN EXPRESSING THEIR SOARING ADULATION FOR "SOLE LEADER" SOMOZA. A COMMON THEME WAS THAT EARTHQUAKE RELIEF ASSISTANCE WAS BEING GIVEN TO NICARAGUA ONLY BECAUSE OF THE DONOR GOVERNMENTS GREAT FRIENDSHIP AND ADMIRATION

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FOR GENERAL SOMOZA. THESE SPEECHES PROVIDED AMPLE GRIST FOR THE MILL OF OPPOSITION LA PRENSA WHICH RIDICULED SUCH FESTIVITIES IN A TIME OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY AND LABELED THE "AID ONLY BECAUSE OF SOMOZA" THEME PREPOSTEROUS.
A DIPLOMATIC CASUALTY OF THE LEON EVENT WAS THE NEWLY ARRIVED PANAMIAM AMBASSADOR WHO, AS THE SOLE DIPLOMAT PRESENT, FOUND HIMSELF PLASTERED ACROSS THE FRONT PAGE OF LA PRENSE IN THE EMBRACE OF LIBERAL PARTY LEADERS.
SHELTON

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